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[illegible] DATE: Oct. 18, 1963
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FROM : Amconsul THESSALONIKI

SUBJECT : PAPANDREOU's Tour of Northern Greece

REF :

Following his opening address in Thessaloniki on October 13, (ConGen A-28 of October 18, 1963), PAPANDREOU toured Western Macedonia speaking at Yiannitsa, Edessa, Florina, Kastoria, Grevena, Kozani, Verria and Katerini. He then went east, speaking at Kilkis, Serres, Drama, Kavalla, Xanthi, Komotini and Alexandroupolis, with extra, unscheduled stops at Chrysoupolis and Eleftheroupolis, before returning directly to Athens on October 18.

As with the Caramanlis tour, one week earlier, the CU press termed the tour a magnificent success with crowds 2-3 times larger than those for Caramanlis, while the pro-ERE press called the tour a failure, and objective evaluation is difficult for the reasons set forth in the Consulate General's A-24 of October 17, 1963. Evidence, again based on crowd pictures, indicates that the tour was successful.

Papandreou, like Caramanlis, appeared to de-emphasize attacks on his opponents during the tour and to concentrate instead on the problems of the rural population — farmers' debts, farmers' pensions, etc. — while appealing to minority groups — such as the Turks of Western Thrace, to whom he promised no religious or political discrimination. Throughout the tour he continued his appeal to youth with promises of educational reform.

Again like Caramanlis, Papandreou appears to have addressed himself to the problems of Northern Greece and his ideas as to their solution.

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Drafted by: RSFolsom:bck 10/18/63

Contents and Classification Approved by:

Clearances:

It is clear that Papandreou has been drawing far better crowds than he attracted in 1961 and that, at least in some if not many cases, he is drawing better crowds than Caramanlis a week earlier. The results of his Thessaloniki speech and the subsequent tour thus have raised CU hopes in this area to a high level which, as of this writing, appear to be starting a bandwagon movement in favor of the CU. It is too early to forecast how far this will go, but unquestionably CU confidence has increased and ERE has been shaken.

Robert S. Folsom
Consul General

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